

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A method of managing electronic money, which is defined as an electronic alternative to a currency, stored in a medium, comprising the steps of:

(a) setting an amount of electronic money (hereinafter called "amount") payable only for a particular purpose as a minimum balance in said medium;

(b) discriminating whether or not a payment is for said particular purpose, when making the payment;

(c) discriminating whether or not a total balance of electronic money (hereinafter called "total balance") remaining in the medium after the payment is smaller than said minimum balance; [[and]]

(d) allowing the payment within a range of the total balance in the medium if the result of the discriminating in said step (b) is positive; and

[[(d)]] (e) prohibiting the payment if the result of said discriminating is negative in step (b) and if the result of said discriminating is positive in step (c).

Claim 2 (original) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 1, wherein in said balance discriminating step (c), an amount to be paid is compared with a general balance, which is the amount obtained by subtracting said minimum balance from said total balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 3 (original) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 1, wherein in said balance discriminating step (c), said total balance remaining after the payment is compared with said minimum balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 4 (currently amended) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 1, wherein said ~~maximum~~ minimum balance setting step (a) is carried out when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 5 (currently amended) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 2, wherein said ~~maximum~~ minimum balance setting step (a) is carried out when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 6 (currently amended) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 3, wherein said ~~maximum~~ minimum balance setting step (a) is carried out when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 7 (original) A method of managing electronic money according to claim 1, wherein if the result of said discriminating is positive in said purpose discriminating step (b) and if the result of said discriminating is positive in said balance discriminating step (c), the payment is allowed.

Claim 8 (currently amended) An electronic money managing system comprising:
a medium having a storage section for storing electronic money, which is defined as an electronic alternative to a currency;
charging means for making charging by notifying said medium of payment purpose information along with an amount to be paid, said charging means being disposed independently of said medium and is adapted to be communicably connected with said medium;
payment means for making a payment in response to said charging by said charging means;
minimum balance setting means for setting an amount of electronic money (hereinafter called "amount") payable only for a particular purpose as a minimum balance in said medium;
purpose judgment means for discriminating whether or not the payment is for said particular purpose, based on said payment purpose information received from said charging means, when said payment means makes the payment;
balance judgment means for discriminating whether or not a total balance of electronic money (hereinafter called "total balance") remaining in the medium after the payment is smaller

than said minimum balance; and

control means for controlling said payment means ~~so as~~ to prohibit the payment if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment means is negative and if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment means is positive, and to allow the payment within the range of the total balance in the medium if the result of the discriminating in said purpose judgment means is positive.

Claim 9 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 8, wherein said balance judgment means compares the amount to be paid with a general balance, which is the amount obtained by subtracting said minimum balance from said total balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 10 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 8, wherein said balance judgment means compares said total balance remaining after the payment with said minimum balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 11 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 8, wherein said minimum balance setting means sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 12 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 9, wherein said minimum balance setting means sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 13 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 10, wherein said minimum balance setting means sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 14 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 8, wherein if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment means is positive and also if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment means is positive, said control means controls said payment means so as to allow the payment.

Claim 15 (original) An electronic money managing system according to claim 8, wherein said payment means, said minimum balance setting means, said purpose judgment means, said balance judgment means, and said control means are collectively disposed in said medium.

Claim 16 (currently amended) A medium for managing/holding electronic money, which is defined as an electronic alternative to a currency, said medium being adapted to be

communicably connected with charging means for making charging by notifying said medium of payment purpose information along with an amount to be paid, the charging means being disposed independently of said medium, said medium comprising:

a storage section for storing electronic money;

a payment section for making a payment in response to the charging by the charging means;

a minimum balance setting section for setting an amount payable only for a particular purpose as a minimum balance in said medium;

a purpose judgment section for discriminating whether or not the payment is for the particular purpose, based on said payment purpose information received from the charging means, when said payment section makes the payment;

a balance judgment section for discriminating whether or not a total balance of electronic money (hereinafter called "total balance") remaining in said medium after the payment is smaller than said minimum balance; and

a control section for controlling said payment section so as to prohibit the payment if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment section is negative and if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment section is positive, and to allow the payment within the range of the total balance in the medium if the result of the discriminating in said purpose judgment section is positive.

Claim 17 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 16, wherein said balance judgment section compares the amount to be paid with a general balance, which is the amount obtained by subtracting said minimum balance from said total balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 18 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 16, wherein said balance judgment section compares said total balance remaining after the payment with said minimum balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 19 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 16, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded to said storage section.

Claim 20 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 17, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded to said storage section.

Claim 21 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 18, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded to said storage section.

Claim 22 (original) A medium for managing/holding electronic money according to claim 16, wherein if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment section is positive and also if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment section is positive, said control section controls said payment section so as to allow the payment.

Claim 23 (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium in which an electronic money managing program for instructing a computer to execute a function of managing electronic money is recorded, the electronic money being defined as an electronic alternative to a currency and stored in said medium, said medium being adapted to be communicably connected with charging means for making charging by notifying said medium of payment purpose information along with an amount to be paid, the charging means being disposed independently of said medium, wherein said electronic money managing program instructs the computer to function as the following:

a payment section for making a payment in response to the charging by the charging means; a minimum balance setting section for setting an amount payable only for a particular purpose as a minimum balance in said medium;

a purpose judgment section for discriminating whether or not the payment is for the particular purpose, based on said payment purpose information received from the charging means, when said payment section makes the payment;

a balance judgment section for discriminating whether or not a total balance of electronic

money (hereinafter called "the total balance") remaining in said medium after the payment is smaller than said minimum balance; and

a control section for controlling said payment section ~~so as~~ to prohibit the payment if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment section is negative and if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment section is positive, and to allow the payment within the range of the total balance in the medium if the result of the discriminating in said purpose judgment section is positive.

Claim 24 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 23, wherein said balance judgment section compares the amount to be paid with a general balance, which is the amount obtained by subtracting said minimum balance from said total balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 25 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 23, wherein said balance judgment section compares said total balance remaining after the payment with said minimum balance, to make the discrimination.

Claim 26 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 23, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 27 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 24, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 28 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 25, wherein said minimum balance setting section sets said minimum balance when electronic money is loaded on said medium.

Claim 29 (original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 23, wherein if the result of the discrimination by said purpose judgment section is positive and also if the result of the discrimination by said balance judgment section is positive, said control section controls said payment section so as to allow the payment.

Claims 30-31 (canceled).